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C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 006509

SIPDIS

AF/SPG FOR MARY FLEMING AND PHIL DROUIN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/24/2015

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [MOPS](#) [EG](#) [SU](#) [SA](#) [KBIO](#)

SUBJECT: SUDAN: DARFUR REBEL GROUPS AND ZAM ZAM BLOCKADE;
NEW MFA SUDAN TEAM

REF: STATE 152250 (NOTAL)

Classified by Acting ECPO Counselor John Desrocher for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) Post is unaware of any permanent official representation in Egypt of either the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) or the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM). While representatives of these Darfur rebel groups may occasionally transit Cairo and engage locally-based Sudanese opposition groups and possibly with the GOE on a low-key basis, post does not maintain contact with either group. We do engage regularly, however, with the National Democratic Alliance, which we understand has ties to the Darfur rebel groups. In future meetings with the NDA leadership, we intend to share reftel demarche points and request that the message be conveyed to the SLA leadership.

2. (C) During an August 22 conversation with poloff, MFA Sudan Affairs Office Director Afifi Abdelwahab asserted that neither the SLM/A nor the JEM maintain offices in Egypt. Contact with these groups, he said, was made via Egyptian embassies in the region (i.e., "Asmara"). Nevertheless, Afifi said that SLM/A Secretary General Mini Menawi had in June requested an invitation from the GOE, had been welcomed, but failed to show up without explanation. Asked about reports of problems with humanitarian access to refugee camps such as the Zam Zam camp in northern Darfur (reftel), Abdelwahab said that he was unaware of any such problems. Abdelwahab took the opportunity to make a plug for Egypt's field hospital located in El Fasher, which he said, maintained 13 doctors who had "treated thousands" of Sudanese.

3. (C) Bio notes: Afifi Abdelwahab (Minister Plenipotentiary) was recently assigned to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia as Consul General and plans to arrive there shortly with his wife and children. He welcomed contact with USG colleagues while in the Kingdom. Abdelwahab has been a good working-level contact of this Embassy, has proficient English language skills, and is positively disposed toward the U.S. His previous diplomatic postings to Saudi Arabia should allow Afifi to quickly settle in. Abdelwahab's predecessor in the Sudan Affairs job, Mohamed Qassem, is currently Egypt's Ambassador to Riyadh, suggesting the importance to Egypt of maintaining close relations with the Saudis on Sudan issues. Abdelwahab is expected to be replaced in the MFA Sudan Affairs Office by Egypt's Ambassador to Kampala, Uganda Mr. Mafoum Marzouk (phonetic). End bio notes.

4. (U) Minimize considered.

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JONES